

## **Background Information**

Cornerstone Adult Services has been serving the frail elderly and adults with disabilities of Rhode Island for over 35 years. In 1973, Cornerstone (then known as Warwick Central Geriatric Day Care Center) opened the first adult day center in Rhode Island. From its auspicious beginnings as one room in the Central Baptist Church, Cornerstone now operates four adult day centers in Rhode Island. Throughout its 35 year history, Cornerstone has provided day services including supervised therapeutic activities, nursing care, meals, physical exercise and cognitive therapy in a protected environment to impaired adults and individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. Two centers are located in Warwick, and a third in Coventry. In 1987, Cornerstone recognized the special needs of persons with Alzheimer's and established the first dementia-specific day center in Rhode Island. In 2001, the fourth center opened in Bristol.

Three of the centers have a mixed population of adults with infirmities including stroke-related disabilities, cardiac conditions, Diabetes, Multiple Sclerosis, developmental disabilities, Alzheimer's disease, and other physical and mental disabilities. Cornerstone's third, state-of-the art, 7,000 square foot facility, was designed from the ground up to meet the special needs of people with Alzheimer's disease and devoted exclusively to their care. Built in 2001 on the same site as the original center on Warwick Neck Avenue in Warwick, it is destined to become a national model of care for the Alzheimer's disease afflicted. This very special center offers a full range of activities and can be adapted to allow large and small group activities as well as private space for individual activities. The new facility doubled the participant capacity of the facility it replaced. Features include lighting and design that create a soothing and relaxing environment and an open plan that allows people to wander safely both inside and out. Activity centers, such as a baking area, encourage participants to interact, create and enjoy a sense of accomplishment.

In response to need expressed by our participants' families, we have expanded our services to include Saturday respite care which affords families an opportunity to shop, run errands, visit other family members or simply rest, knowing their family member is being cared for in a safe, secure and supervised environment.

Cornerstone's social workers, in addition to their primary responsibilities, run support groups for caregivers and an educational series in the community, and are a lifeline to caregivers who are often stressed and in need of assistance to locate help for their loved one.

In 1994, Cornerstone Adult Services, Inc. was funded by the national Robert Wood Johnson Foundation-sponsored "Partner in Caregiving: The Dementia Services Program." for services to the elderly. In 1998, Cornerstone began a 20-hour course, "Putting the Special in Specialized Care," designed for persons working with and caring for Alzheimer's disease afflicted individuals and those with other forms of dementia. In addition to requiring Cornerstone's staff to attend this course, it is taught to staff in nursing homes and other facilities.

Our record of teaching is nationally recognized. Cornerstone was selected in 1999 as one of only 18 centers across the country to be named a National Model Teaching Day Center as part of a \$1.9 million technical assistance program funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Professionals, from new and expanding programs throughout the country visited our Alzheimer's center site for one-day training sessions. Cornerstone will teach financing, marketing, and programming techniques developed over the past 30 years.

With the opening of the Alzheimer's Care Center and Bristol day center, Cornerstone began a new era in the care of Rhode Island's valued seniors.

Cornerstone Adult Services, Inc. is committed to providing quality care and assistance to its frail, elderly and impaired adult participants to enable them to live to their optimum level of health, functioning and independence while optimizing each individual's quality of life, and that of their caregivers.